GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:634
ANSWERED ON:27.07.2000
RELEASE OF SECRET INDIAN DEFENCE DATA BY US SCIENTISTS
GADDE RAMAMOHAN

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether on May 16, 2000 photographs and data pertaining to Indian Defence Research Complexat Kunchanbagh in Hyderabad were released in New York by the American Scientists;

(b) if so, how they got the secret photographs; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereon?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES)

(a) As per the news reports published in the Asian Age (New Delhi) and Deccan Chronicle (Hyderabad) on May 18, 2000, the Federation of American Scientists have released three views of a satellite image of Defence Research and Development Laboratories Complex on the outskirts of Hyderabad.

(b) As per the news reports, these satellite images have been obtained by Federation of American Scientists from an aerial photograph and mapping service company called Space Imaging, which is based in Denver, Colorado (USA).

(c) As per United Nations Outer Space Treatyof 1967, the outer space cannot be claimed as national territory. Therefore, the countries have no grounds for objecting to being imaged from outer space. On the contrary, the Legal Principles adopted by UN General Assembly in 1986 provide for right of countries to access satellite data on non-discriminatory basis and on reasonable cost terms.